Select Notes.

BY J. B. LAIR.

—A Crow Indian by the name of Bowed Head, recently in a speech at a conference said this, "The only man I am afraid of is the God in whom I believe." So much for the Indian. It is a great deal more than many of his more civilized (?) brethren can truthfully say.

—Here is what a paper says of the Shittim tree. "Within a radius of 60 miles of Nashville, Tenn., there is to be found a tree, that is said to be the Shittim wood of ark fame. Celebrated Botanists from all over the country have examined the trees and agree that they grow nowhere else on the globe. They have decided that it is the Shittim wood of which Noah's ark was constructed, mention of which is made several places in the Bible. The tree is of medium size, with a very dark smooth bark, and the wood is of a bright gold color. In early spring the trees are laden with long white blossoms, closely resembling great Ostrich feathers. There seems to be no doubt about the identity of the trees, and it is remarkable that they are found only in this small area, and so few at that."

—My Christian brethren and sisters, what is your comfort in this life? Does your happiness consist in any thing in this life? If so, it is transient. Have you any comfort aside from hope? Have you happiness except in anticipation of future glory? Is it not true that our happiness here consists of anticipation and hope—I do not wonder that Paul asserts, that "If in this life only we have hope, we are of all men most miserable." For if we ourselves are within the limits of Gospel salvation, there is *sin* enough around us to make us "miserable." Hence it is again apparant, that our happiness consists of *hope*—of *hope* for a better life—a life where there is no sin.

In hoping, our hope generally takes form, or in other words we locate our hope, and as a rule it is located in heaven, to which I do not seriously object; but my Bible teaches me of a triumphant glorious reign with Christ a "Thousand years." First of all, and beyond this, my Bible reveals so little that I cannot arrive at any definite conclusion. I might conclude it was heaven after this—as every body thinks it will be. But I find that the thousand year dispensation is to be under new law—or different law to the present, and that being a fact—there may still be a different law following that, but about that all is conjecture. Suffice it to know that all will be for our good and God's glory.

—I may be called unorthodox to call in question a feature of religious belief, that is believed and taught, and prayed. and sung, and that is that Jesus is the *sin forgiver*. It is orthodox belief that Jesus forgives sins—but I need not care for orthodoxy if it is not in accord with scripture.

But to the point. Christ is *our advocate*—Now does Christ plead with Himself? Certainly not, but with the Father. What for? Were it not for *sin* we would not need an advocate, neither pardon. Then it is evident that Christ pleads for *us*—for mercy for *us*, and for the pardon of our sins. Then Christ does not forgive sins, but pleads with the Father to have them forgiven, for us. 1st John 2: 1. Heb. 9: 24.

Now take another view. Christ is Mediator—between Himself and man? No verily, but between God and man. Would it be reasonable for Christ to mediate with Himself? Certainly not, but perfectly reasonable that He should mediate with the Father for us—He intercedes in our behalf, on account of sin. Then it appears again that Christ does not forgive sins—but the Father through Christs intercession. I am not disputing the fact that Jesus did forgive sins while on earth, but I am just comparing modern teaching with reason and the Bible. I have heard it taught from my earliest recollection, and I hear it yet, that Jesus forgives sins, but if He does, He is not "an advocate with the Father for us,"but with Himself, neither does He mediate with the Father but with Himself. And then we would have to pray direct to Christ, and not *through Christ*, or *in the name of Christ*—to the Father as the Bible teaches, for it does teach that what we ask in the *name of Christ, the Father will do for us.*

While I do not claim strict originality for every thing I write, be assured that I do not steal my thoughts. I am studying the Scriptures for what is in them, regardless of former teaching or what any man or set of men believe, and I submit the above paragraph for consideration on its merits, subject however to criticism.

—I noticed recently in a secular paper, some person asking a question, on an important religious subject, and the answer was, "Every one must decide that matter for themselves," yes, *decide for themselves*, that is just the trouble with the religious world, every body wants to decide the *conditions* of salvation for themselves. Jesus, the Savior in their opinion, had not the right to make the conditions, but they wish to make their own. Well then I suppose such people ought to make their own salvation, and their own heaven.

—I have noticed in religious journals, have heard, both from the pulpit, and in private conversation, ministers say "*My* church," "*My* meeting," "*My* work," and *My* etcetras. I just state this as a gentle reminder to the brethren that they—*we* I mean, do not get too much *self*, in our work. Give God the praise.

—John L. Sullivan, the bombast, whose whole life was spent in drinking, fighting and carousing generally, has been to his senses by a spell of sickness by which he barely escaped the monster death. He now says that he never intends to drink any more whisky, wine or beer, and says he "no friend of mine will ever ask me to take another drink"—Did you ever think this young man? He is no friend that will ask you to "take a drink," you may for the time, believe him to be, but in reality he is your enemy—he is your worst enemy, he is the devil's emissary to drag your body to a drunkard's grave, and your soul to hell.

Just think of it, the man who would induce you to murder or steal, cannot be your friend. Neither is the man who would induce you to take something that would bring sorrow to your family, and disgrace and ruin to yourself. Spurn such a friend (?) as you would a viper.

—I notice in a recent No. of the G. M. where an elder took the applicants 25 miles to baptize them in *running* water, because they, or he did not know if "Tank baptism was valid or not. Every school boy that ever read his Bible knows that water baptism is valid, but these elders did not seem to know.

But then the reason that they want to baptize in the river, is because Jesus was baptized in the Jordan.

Very good. I admire the idea of doing as Jesus *done*, but I admire more doing as he *commanded*. Let us see, Jesus was baptized in Jordan, so we must be too—in a river at least. Jesus wore a *seamless coat* upon the same hypothesis, so must we. Jesus, washed feet in a large *upper room*, so must we. Jesus ate the *last supper* in a large *upper room*, so must we. Jesus *kissed* a *devil*, so must we. Jesus *preached upon the mountain*, so must we.—Oh but hold on you say, these things are of no consequence, so we do our duty—no difference about the coat, and house &c. Well that is just what we have been thinking this long time, for "The letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life."

But there is another class of things that you must do too, if you will do just as Jesus done. He walked on the water, fed the multitude, cast out devil and worked miracles in a general way—but you say you can't do that. Very good, if you can't find a river or a lake just baptize in a mud hole rather than fail, it will be water baptism nevertheless and that is all that the Bible requires.

I just now remember that it was a "lake, nice and clear" that these elders found to baptize in after going 25 miles. I happen to know that there are no large lakes near Garden City Kan. and it is more than probable that it was an artificial lake. So what would be the difference in the lake and the water tank, the difference in favor of the lake is that it is larger, and that is all.

God is a reasonable God, and hence the Bible is a reasonable Bible, a great deal more so than some of its would,be adherents.

—The railroad from Joppa to Jerusalem is now completed, and travelers can now make the trip without the usual annoyance and even danger, previously encountered. This is a long stride in the direction of the settling and rebuilding of Palestine, and Jerusalem. To my mind this is very significant.

—Delays are dangereous to all but Omnipotence. The second death. A *second* implies a *first*—we cannot conceive of a second without the antecedent first. Now tell how unlike the *second death* is to the *first.*

—We are "an expelled set." Well so was Martin Luther, John Knox and a thousand of others who had the moral courage to stand for truth and right, God's WORD was more to them than *expulsion.* So is it today "With the true and the tried."

—"Six counties, says the Courier Journal," in Kentucky, have never had a church within their borders during the 60 or 70 years of their existence. Here is work to be done, much nearer than China or Africa

—We seldom hear an exhortation without being exhorted to "prepare for death," "prepare to die" &c. Now death is only a consequence of our mortality, the medium by which we change this life for the next—then why not prepare to live? We do not live here to prepare for death—we live in this life to prepare for the life beyond. Death is to this life just what the period is to the sentence. The period marks a full stop; but it does not change the meaning in any sense whatever, just so death to us, it marks a full stop, but it cannot change our condition in any way, hence death is no part of the consideration in our preparation for the beyond. So

"If the breath thus vainly spent
Were to heaven in supplications sent,"

for strength to live in eternal happiness in the other world, it would be better.—It is possible to make too much of a thing, and I am not sure but there is to much made of education for the minister. So many write, as if the College enterprise would fail, we could not fit any men for the ministry—I do not want to detract anything from the importance of a fine education, for no one feels the lack of it more than I do, but I do not want people to think that a Collegiate education is only requisite there is, for I have knowledge of certain men that had little or no education, and they were *powerful* ministers for Christ. Prominent among them was one Simon Peter, John Zebedee, and his Bro James, and others that I need not mention. And even today, among men who have no Collegiate education, are men who call forth the interrogation "From whence have these men their learning?" Man being educated at the school of Christ, is what the effectual minister. The Christed minister is more effectual, without a College education, than the College bred minister is without Christ, but both together are doubtless most effectual. But don't let us talk about the one all the time, it may possibly detract from the other.

Joshua led the army of Isreal to battle their enemies "In the name of the Lord." And this is just the way the minister wants to go out on the enemies ground, and not in the name of some College. This is not intended to reflect on education, nor Colleges, but to keep us "Nearer my God to thee."

—This government requires the obedience of every one of its subjects, and as a reward for that obedience, it undertakes the protection of each and every one of its subjects. What is true of this nation, is true of every Nation, Kingdom, and Empire, of the world. Protection is the reward of obedience offered by nations, but with God it is more. He has not only promised to "be with you in six troubles and not forsake you in the seventh," to guide, direct and protest, in this life—but to give as a reward—*Eternal life*, life in the world to come, and not only life, but unspeakable happiness and pleasure as well. Such may do for Nations, yet they may signally fail. Such will do for the God of heaven and earth, for He is able to perform. "His word is gone forth, and it will not return void." But now I come to the point and ask, what can a church do for its subjects, as a reward of their obedience to its mandates? What has a church to give? Pray tell what, that Christ does not give? Then why should any one be asked to